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AUTHOR	Schuyler, Gwyer
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ABSTRACT

This study discusses how a curriculum, based on the multiple influences of college educators, administrators, state officials, private industry and 4-year institutions, determines the kinds of knowledge available to students. Examined is the relationship between knowledge and power as inextricably linked factors in forming curriculum. The study charts the process of curriculum formation in one California community college district through an exploratory study involving interviews, observations, and document analysis. In particular, the processes of one college within the broader context of the Los Angeles Community College District and the state were explored. The following four aspects are considered in the study's discussion: (1)governmental involvement as reflected in the legislative history; (2) faculty involvement; (3) specific approval procedures; and (4) financial factors. Observations included meetings of the College Curriculum Committee, the College Academic Senate, the District Academic Senate, and the District Board of Trustees. Documents reviewed include the college curriculum approval guidelines, the state's curriculum approval manual, materials related to meetings attended, policy briefs and reports, related research, and pertinent legislation. Included in the study's scope are the effects of Title 5 and specific curriculum approval procedures. (Contains 13 references.) (AS)

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Constructing the Curriculum: Power and Knowledge in the Community College System

Gwyer Schuyler

University of California Los Angeles
Graduate School of Education

Paper presented at the Association of Higher Education, November 5-8, 1998, Miami, FL.

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Constructing the Curriculum: Power and Knowledge in the California Community College System

Gwyer Schuyler
UCLA Doctoral Candidate
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schuyler@ucla.edu
310/206-1200

Introduction

Knowledge, the substantive component of the curriculum, is valued for multiple reasons. In economic terms, certain kinds of knowledge - such as that taught in vocational courses - translate directly into income potential. Knowledge is also valued for social, personal, and political reasons. Moreover, knowledge is integrally related to social power. What one knows and does not know, to an important extent, dictates one's power and place in society. In this way, knowledge can be viewed as a form of capital (Apple, 1995).

The kinds of knowledge available to students are inevitably limited. Curriculum content defines the knowledge available to students. How a curriculum is designed is the result of a dynamic interaction of college educators, administrators, state officials, private industry and four-year institutions. Depending on the priorities of those involved in the process, different kinds of knowledge are endorsed.

With ever-changing demands on the curriculum, community colleges have to balance these demands with the needs of the students. The question must be asked, though, whether the community college curriculum could become dominated by one agenda if this agenda was backed by powerful resources and influence. Could the community college curriculum be bought or swayed by outside forces? It is from this line of questioning that critical study is called for to understand and assess how the curriculum is shaped by state, district and local government and

how the community college negotiates the needs of students, faculty, administrators, and the state. In particular, this study seeks to address the fundamental questions, how is the community college curriculum formed and what factors shape it? The findings of this study will be analyzed in terms of Michel Foucault's conceptions of the relation between power and knowledge.

Theoretical Framework

Power and knowledge are inextricably linked in curriculum formation. Michel Foucault's concept of knowledge/power describes the integrated and reciprocal nature of these two elements. According to Foucault, many conceptions of power are inadequate to understand both its relation to knowledge and its multiple locations. Foucault sees it as an oversimplification to locate power only within a dominating force, such as the state or wealthy class. Foucault turns his attention to the mechanisms of power as found in everyday life, throughout discourse. To do so, Foucault offers an alternative notion of power as penetrating a discourse like capillaries throughout the body. He characterizes power as productive and diffuse, as shaping discourse and the subjects, or individuals, within discourse.

The productive quality of power must be understood through its intimate relation to knowledge. Often overlooked in historical study, power and knowledge are fundamentally integrated, such that "it is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power" (Foucault, 1978, p. 52). Taking this even further, power creates and bounds discourses, which are made of certain knowledges. Within a discourse, one's conception of self is also created and bounded by the knowledges that have been produced by power. In the case of the discourses of higher education, for example, subjects are constructed as students, faculty, and administrators.

One mechanism of power over individuals is discipline. In Foucault's history of the Western penal system, he investigates disciplinary practices and shows how their instrumentation has shifted from torturous means to nonviolent yet pervasive means of surveillance (Foucault, 1977). It is through these hidden mechanisms of discipline that power has the greatest hold on subjects. Disciplinary power, invisible in its exertion, exerts a steady stream of power, shaping individuals through the modalities of observation, normalizing judgment, and examination. Discipline "'makes' individuals; it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise" (Foucault, 1977, p. 170). Always alert and everywhere, discipline differentiates individuals within a field of comparison. By setting forth the rules to be followed, it establishes a norm to which all subjects work to conform. The power of normalization, Foucault (1977) states, "imposes homogeneity; but it individualizes by making it possible to measure gaps, to determine levels, to fix specialities and to render the differences useful by fitting them one to another" (p. 184). Thus, discipline is a powerful mechanism that imposes an inescapable, normalizing gaze on the individual.

While the disciplinary power of an intrusive governing structure may seem all-pervasive, points of resistance always exist. It is from these points of resistance - leaks within the capillary flow of power - that efforts to promote change can gain strength. The identification of first, the mechanisms of power, and second, potential points of resistance to those mechanisms, are important steps in the change process.

Some may question whether the application of Foucault's framework to empirical research is appropriate. And it is true that the Foucault himself promoted a certain approach to analysis that more closely resembles that used in the field of cultural history. Thus, this project would not be considered a "Foucauldian analysis." The above-described concepts of knowledge/power and

discipline, however, are compelling enough to the field of education and to curriculum studies in particular that a connection is made in this paper between these Foucauldian concepts and findings based on more traditional empirical research.

Background Literature

As the community college system has expanded over the last forty years, the curriculum has grown and changed just as rapidly. The greatest change has come from the explosion in vocational, or non-liberal arts, course offerings (Cohen and Ignash, 1994) and in particular, in technology-related areas. Other changes have occurred in the community college curriculum in response to the growing numbers of students from diverse cultural backgrounds (Piland and Silva, 1996).

While there are numerous studies that examine changes in the community college curriculum, few studies have explored the process of curriculum decision making. One exception found three common factors that influence curriculum procedures: 1) The need to balance campus autonomy within district-wide concerns; 2) The importance of systematic procedures and the need for constituents to know what happens to a curriculum proposal; and 3) The need to include a diverse group in decision making (Merren, 1992).

The relationship between the community college and the state is significant in the study of curriculum formation. In general, the relationship is one primarily based on two factors - funding and educational priorities. In terms of funding, some institutions depend on state appropriations for as much as 80 percent of their revenue, while others receive less than a third of their revenue from the state (Cohen & Brawer, 1996). This variability is understandable because in some states, the community college systems rely on local tax dollars, while in the majority of states, they rely

heavily on state appropriations. In terms of the curriculum, however, the extent to which different funding structures affect content has been little addressed in the literature.

Along with providing funding, the state often plays a coordinating role in the educational priorities of higher education. The degree of state involvement in the curriculum and in the community college in general differs in that those states with comprehensive plans of higher education are usually more integrally involved in the procedures and the priorities of the college, including the design and approval of the curriculum (Keith, 1996).

Little research has looked specifically at the effects of the relationship of the state and the community college on the curriculum. However, issues of state involvement and institutional autonomy are fundamentally related to the state's influence, either direct or indirect, on the curriculum. Due to variability across states, no simple generalizations can be made about the state's role in curriculum development. The intricacies can be better understood if the curriculum processes of community colleges are considered state-by-state.

Research Method

The process of curriculum formation in one district within the California Community College system was analyzed through an exploratory study involving interviews, observations and document analysis. In particular, the processes of one college within the broader context of the Los Angeles Community College District and state were explored. The college was chosen because of its comprehensive nature and its typical, well-rounded curriculum that includes transfer education, occupational education, general education, transitional education - entailing remedial and basic skill education as well as English as a second language, continuing education, and community service courses. Only those processes and forces influencing the formation of credit courses were considered.

Following an initial interview with an administrator of academic affairs at the college, the college's welfare-to-work program coordinator and two faculty members - one who has been associated with the college for over 40 years and the other who is the chair of the College Curriculum Committee - were identified as key informants and subsequently interviewed. General research questions guided the interviews; no strict interview schedule was followed. For example, the interviews were begun with an introductory question, "What do you think is the most significant factor influencing your institution's curriculum?" Open-ended questions were then posed to get at the details underlying the responses.

Observations included a College Curriculum Committee meeting, a College Academic Senate meeting, a District Academic Senate meeting, and a District Board of Trustees meeting. Moreover, documents reviewed include the college curriculum approval guidelines, the state's curriculum approval manual, materials related to meetings attended, policy briefs and reports, related research, and pertinent legislation.

Findings

State, district, and institutional influence on the curriculum comes in many forms and from many sources. While many others deserve attention, this discussion will consider four aspects: 1) governmental involvement as reflected in the legislative history; 2) faculty involvement; 2) specific approval procedures; and 3) financial factors.

Governmental Involvement

To understand curriculum formation and the forces that act upon the process, it is not enough only to study the present-day formal lines of curriculum approval. Up until the 1960s, the state Legislature maintained official control over academic and administrative practices (Winter, 1964). The specific structures and governing mechanisms for education in the state of California

were codified originally in the 1929 School Code and recodified in the 1959 Education Code. In 1960, a review of the Education Code resulted in the development of the Master Plan for Higher Education. Under this plan, the curriculum of the junior college was to be made up of, but not limited to, three components: 1) college transfer courses; 2) vocational-technical courses, and 3) general and liberal arts courses.

Outside consultants, who were commonly university administrators, were called upon by the state to provide reports and recommendations to the Legislature about all aspects of the institutions. Yet those within the junior colleges themselves had very little involvement in policy formation. In 1964, however, the passage of a provision of the California Code of Regulations allowed for the establishment of academic senates or faculty councils to represent faculty in formulating policy related to academic and professional matters. In addition, the formation of the Community College Board of Governors at the state level and Boards of Trustees at the local level in 1967 further shifted power away from the state legislature.

Based on the experience of a faculty member, who has been on staff since the 1940s, actual college practices were more locally controlled than the legislative history reflects. He reminisced that in those early days, few people within the college had any previous experience at the community college level. Recently splintered from the college's host high school, the community college and its curriculum were a new phenomenon about which both administrators and faculty alike knew little. One member of the faculty who had prior experience at another community college was given the responsibility of drawing up the curriculum. Gradually, then, as the need arose, new courses were added. If an academic department recommended an additional course or program, de facto, the administrators and the state would approve it.

The major curriculum-related regulatory directive was expanded in the late 1970s under Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. In this document, administration of the California Community Colleges was codified more comprehensively than it had previously been in the Education Code. It is within this document that the details of the process of curriculum formation are outlined; regulations cover the classification of courses, the official establishment of college curriculum committees, detailed standards and criteria for courses, requirements for articulation agreements with 4-year institutions, and requirements for general education within the Associate Degree.

The effects of Title 5 on course content are largely indirect through procedural directives. However, one example in which Title 5 goes beyond prescribing procedures of course approval and instead dictates specific knowledge content of the curriculum relates to social science subject matter:

> The course of instruction in social sciences shall include a study of the role, participation, and contribution of both men and women, black Americans, American Indians, Mexicans, Asians, Pacific Island people, and other ethnic groups to the economic political, and social development of California and the United States of America (Barclays Official California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Article 1, Section 55004).

Of all legislation thus far, Title 5 has made the most impact on the community college curriculum. It has laid the strict boundaries around both the approval process and, in some cases as in social sciences, the actual content of the curriculum.

With Title 5 in place, the specifics of curriculum formation were formalized. Yet the central role of the faculty in the process was still not formalized. Faculty involvement in curriculum formation - and many other aspects of community college management, for that matter

- would not be crystallized until the late 1980s. A growing sentiment about the stagnating effect state governance pushed the legislature to undergo an evaluation and hearings process that culminated in Assembly Bill 1725. AB 1725 is best known for its provisions regarding shared governance, and in particular, the guarantee of college academic senate participation. This has important implications for curriculum formation. Prior to AB1725, the faculty did not have a formal role in the approval process. After it, the college academic senates still did not have the power of approval but they did gain formal recognition in the process, and the Board of Governors was called upon to "develop policies and guidelines for strengthening the role of the academic senate with regard to the determination and administration of academic and professional standards, course approval and curricula, and other academic matters" (quoted in Howell, 1994).

Shared governance was designed as an ideal in the eyes of the legislature. In an editorial of a newsletter from the California Higher Education Policy Center, Trombley (1997) labeled shared governance as elusive: "On local campuses, the concept of 'shared governance' . . . has shrouded the decision-making process in confusion and has led to power struggles up and down the state between faculty organizations and college administrators" (p. 1). The meaning of shared governance is contested and challenged in many arenas of community college management, but comparatively, on matters related to the curriculum, the academic senate is readily consulted.

Faculty Involvement

The curriculum, as described by the administrator of academic affairs, "emanat[es] from the faculty" although "sometimes there will be informal discussions and one of my deans or myself will say something to a faculty member, 'why don't you do such and such.'" Because the curriculum is largely within the purview of the faculty at both the college and district levels, how motivated the faculty is to participate greatly affects the outcomes. Faculty are relied upon to

propose sound course designs, to evaluate those of their peers, and to actively engage in the formal procedures of curriculum formation.

Some faculty are innovative, some are not. The administrator characterizes those uniquely innovative faculty as "never satisfied with the status quo, they are always looking for a better way to do it." She gave the example of one faculty member in the English department, who worked within the confines of an existing course to create a theme around which the material would be presented.

> That instructor is just very creative and always looking for new ways to do things and still meet the goals and objectives of the course. She doesn't have to do that, she just chooses to because it's exciting for her. We didn't ask her to do that either. She's not getting paid anything extra from the college.

Besides the reliance on faculty to create and innovate courses, the college also relies on a few, highly-motivated faculty members in the formal curriculum approval process itself. The Chair of the Curriculum Committee is central to the process, monitoring and guiding other faculty throughout. The review by the Curriculum Chair perhaps may be the only stage in the curriculum formation process in which the content of the proposed course is scrutinized by someone other than the faculty proposing it or the faculty member's department. The Curriculum Chair characterized himself as "more concerned with substance" than with procedure; he saw himself as a resource for the faculty to help them get their ideas through the regulatory process. If the Curriculum Chair supported a faculty member's idea, he would do whatever it takes, "as long as it is legal," to move a course proposal forward.

The maintenance of a committed group of Committee members is an ongoing struggle in that involvement by faculty requires time away from their classroom tasks or the use of free time. It is understandable that under such circumstances, active participation by faculty often wanes.

Lack of faculty involvement is a very real threat to the quality of the community college curriculum since there are few stop gaps outside of the faculty themselves in the monitoring of curriculum content. Outside forces such as the district and state can impose regulations on the process, but when it comes down to the content of a course, it is from within the college, even within the department, that proposed course content is scrutinized.

One way that faculty consistently are motivated is in the maintenance of their department's territory. When a course proposal offered by a faculty in one department is venturing close to the domain of another department, there can be conflicts. The Curriculum Chair stated,

> We have a policy here that every course proposal has to circulate to all departments. . . . If they have an objection, they give it to me. Objections usually come when. . . the Learning Center wants to teach. . . math, and then the Math Department says, "Wait a minute, only the Math Department can teach math." Then you have to have discussion about that. . . . It depends on personalities. Sometimes wars take place. . . . Boy it can drag out. If you . . . want to have a history of education class [in the Education department] and the History Department says only historians can teach it, and they want to battle it, they can drag it out for a year.

The administrator relayed a similar story of faculty territoriality and how the matter was resolved administratively:

> The Office Administration (OA) department proposed a new course last spring in using the Internet. The Computer Science (CSIT) department [had previously] proposed a

course in using the Internet. So when OA brought their course forward, Computer Science objected. . . . Encroachment, overlap, you know, the department terrain or domain is pretty well structured and established. Departments do have the right to say, "You're teaching my subject matter." And so CSIT said to OA, "No you can't teach this course the way you proposed it, it sounds too much like our course." And we really don't want to have a whole lot of duplication of subjects, so at that point that objection was raised at the Curriculum Committee when the course was first brought to look at to review. And the objection was actually put in writing to the chair from the CSIT chair regarding the OA course. A [College Curriculum] subcommittee . . . simply took the course outline and got the two department chairs together and other people who might know something about this matter and talked it through. It sort of went back and forth several times. The Office Administration faculty ended up revising their course. They in fact had something distinct and different enough from CSIT that it was a legitimate thing - it was strictly office applications in a business setting that they were going to use it for. OA satisfied the concerns of the CSIT so they rewrote the course outline to clarify it [and] the two chairs agreed that, yes it was all resolved. . . . And so that is how any kind of dispute can be handled. Now that one turned out real well. Sometimes there can be instances when it's not as amicable and a course might end up being withdrawn and brought back a couple years later when the climate is more receptive. It just depends.

Thus, territoriality of faculty and departments over the curriculum functions as an organizing principle in the formation process.

In summary, three manifestations of faculty involvement have been described - involvement in innovation, involvement in the formation process, and involvement in defending

the department's curricular domain. Faculty, therefore, play an important role in both maintaining and changing the curriculum.

Specific Approval Procedures

Comparing the current formal curriculum procedures to the other tiers of California higher education, the Curriculum Committee Chair surmised,

> The university's in a good way in a lot of ways. The only thing the state can do to the universities, to keep them independent of politics, is to dock their money. But for . . . the community colleges, there's a big heavy thing called Title 5. Title 5 talks about all the rules. . . just like secondary [education]. Everything has to check out with the interpretations of Title 5.

With Title 5 setting the regulative tone for all of California community colleges, those community colleges within districts are subject to another layer of regulations. Los Angeles Community College District, in particular, summarized the administrator of academic affairs, "[has] probably one of the most structured and defined curriculum approval processes that I've ever seen." In the Los Angeles Community College District, the formal curriculum approval process involves the review of proposals at multiple organizational levels. The formal procedures for curriculum formation are an overarching organizing structure on the actual practices. Enforced through required procedures, the steps for curriculum approval are rigid and are routinely followed. In some cases, however, the steps may simply be pro-forma.

At the institutional level, the attitude is held that the decision of the Curriculum Committee should be supported; rarely would the College Academic Senate or the Administration veto a decision of the Curriculum Committee, and in particular, the Curriculum Chair. The endorsement of the Curriculum Chair is essential to get a course approved. The role of the

Curriculum Chair could be one characterized as controlling or supportive depending on multiple factors, such as the Chair's style of leadership and the level of involvement of the faculty.

The district involvement in curriculum approval also seems to be largely procedural. The district personnel expect that curriculum proposals are highly scrutinized at the college level. Based on the District Curriculum Committee's review, the District Academic Senate considers any proposals that have broader ramifications for the district. Made up of faculty representatives from all of the colleges, the District Academic Senate addresses district-wide concerns of the faculty. Unless there is a proposed change in curriculum policy, the District Academic Senate by-and-large supports the college's curriculum decisions.

One example in which the District Academic Senate has proposed changes in curriculum policy involves the content of the general education requirements. In 1997, three proposals were brought forward by the District Academic Senate to the district to include three new general education area requirements - multicultural diversity, computer literacy, and lifelong understanding. A process which began in 1995, the District Academic Senate has conducted national, state, and district-wide faculty surveys, two sets of formal hearings, and numerous committee meetings. Out of the three proposed changes, the multicultural education and computer literacy components were entirely new requirements and the lifelong understanding was a proposed replacement of the health and physical education requirement with a broader area that included general courses on wellness and behavior. The District Academic Senate held forums and accepted position papers on these three proposals, but by far the most contentious debate was around the latter proposal of replacement of an existing requirement with a new one.

The elimination of the physical education requirement meant the elimination of guaranteed departmental funding and the potential loss of faculty positions. This debate was not only about

personal convictions but also about employment. In the words of the Curriculum Chair, "PE's fighting for their life." Letters were submitted from faculty and students, defending the benefits of physical education and health education as they are currently taught. This kind of outpouring was not seen around the other two proposals – nobody's livelihood was directly threatened by their inclusion.

The upshot of these proposed general education requirements is yet to be seen. While the District Academic Senate voted for the addition of a multicultural diversity requirement, the computer literacy requirement and the revision of the physical education requirement were not approved. These recommendations have been forwarded to the Board of Trustees, and not until they weigh in on this matter will any change be finalized.

The Board of Trustees of the district has ultimate approval power over institutional course proposals. The state, outside of placing regulations on the process itself, leaves approval of individual courses to the colleges and district. All in all, according to the administrator of academic affairs, "if everything is in order" within a course proposal, the whole process takes roughly six to nine months.

The approval process and its implications are spelled out to newly hired faculty. The administrator describes how faculty are at the same time confined to the course outline that has been officially approved but unfettered in terms of teaching method.

> Whenever we hire a faculty member, [we say] that you are obligated to follow the course outline because that is what is the approved outline for the course. That's what our students expect when they read the description in the catalog. . . . But within that, within that kind of definition, you can present the material, you can use any method - as long as

it's legal, of course - that you choose. So that's in terms of the definition of academic freedom, that's where I see the academic freedom being exemplified.

This interpretation of academic freedom does not address content, only instructional technique. As traditionally understood, academic freedom entitles faculty in their capacity as instructors to "freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject" (American Association of University Professors, 1998). Thus, the community college faculty member is not given academic freedom as in the commonly accepted definition; they are instead given *instructional freedom*.

Several exceptions to the procedural processes of course approval exist. These exceptions are significant in cutting down the approval time. One exception is when a course is already adopted at another college within the district. In this case, a college can approve it for its own curriculum after review solely at the institutional level; no district approval is necessary. The administrator commented that "If one college is really innovative and moving ahead in a certain area, then other colleges can catch up pretty quickly and move behind them and take advantage of the work they've done."

Another exception to the process is in the case of "Experimental or Emergency Action." Characterized as a "pressure valve" by the administrator, courses that are not approved may be offered on a provisional basis for one year by approval at the college level only. To continue the course after one year, the standard approval process must be followed. "If you had all your ducks in a row, and you wanted to. . . . well, I don't think anyone would try and do it that quickly, but to initiate it today, to get it through the curriculum process, to get it approved, and get it on the

district database as an experimental course, to offer it when our spring semester starts (two months later), physically it's possible but its extremely rare that anyone would attempt to do that."

Along with specific procedures for course approval, there are also specific procedures for approval of a new program. These procedures are more rigorous, requiring approval all the way to the state Chancellor's Office. Yet, under an existing program, through faculty and departmental planning and college curriculum committee review, the required courses for a given degree or certificate are configured at the institutional level. One strategy employed by colleges to get around the lengthy approval process for new programs is to reconfigure existing programs to be broad enough so that a range of course types fall within them. In fact, some colleges have not added a new program in decades.

Financial Factors

While it may seem obvious that the financial status of the state, district, and individual college can affect the curriculum, the long-time faculty member who was interviewed commented that he has seen budget crises come and go with little or no change to the curriculum. In real times of crisis, though, courses that are not heavily enrolled with students can be in danger. A budget crunch may result in the reduction of sections in popular classes, so that remaining sections have larger enrollments. Furthermore, new courses cannot be offered if departmental funds are unavailable.

A budget crisis in and of itself does not curtail the development of new courses. This is because in the formation of a new course, the funding source must be identified from existing available moneys, or in some cases, from outside funding sources. A department can eliminate one course to add another or can seek outside funding through a state or federal program. These strategies do not require additional institutional allocations to the department.

One thing that a budget crisis would do is lessen the possibility of a faculty member either being granted a paid sabbatical or receiving extra pay to develop a course. It must be noted, however, that even in financially stable times, financial incentives to develop new courses are already limited.

An instance of financial deficit was experienced by the Los Angeles Community College District at the time of this study. During college and district academic senate meetings as well as the Board of Trustees meetings at that time, budget issues were top on the agendas. The district, searching for creative ways to reduce spending, engaged administration and faculty in a process of brainstorming possible tactics. Recommendations from the District Academic Senate revolved around "achiev[ing] maximum flexibility within the educational program to foster enrollment growth" by using "block scheduling" and video conference methods for the same courses offered at different colleges in the district. In a meeting of college presidents, many different ideas were tossed around, from requesting emergency legislative bailout to a purchasing and hiring freeze to employee furloughs to a cut in the district office budget. There was no mention by presidents to cut course sections. In fact, offering more summer school courses was suggested as a fundraising strategy. In a television interview, however, Los Angeles Community College District Chancellor James Heinselman commented that he "knew for a fact" that courses had been cut in the district (*Admission: Impossible?* KCET, 7:30 p.m., April 8, 1998). Nonetheless, the range of ideas proposed to deal with the financial shortfall illustrate how the curriculum is relatively insulated during a budget crisis. For the most part, existing courses remain intact and new courses that require no new funding may be added, yet new courses that require additional funding would most likely not be actualized.

Although current funding policies may serve to maintain the existing curriculum, newly-proposed policies that make funding contingent on student outcomes exert great change on the curriculum. In the past, efforts to focus attention on student outcomes have come and gone, never taking hold system-wide. For example, in 1996, a Fund for Instructional Improvement (FII) grant was offered by the state to ten colleges to study how to assess and change student outcomes. The grant focused more on academic courses than vocational ones, and was especially geared toward improving faculty skills in aligning course content with student outcome objectives. From the grant proposal, an explanation of the need for such skills is offered:

> Given the current matriculation plan, the institution of pre- or co-requisites and advisories, the California State University's decision to phase out remedial education, and the increased focus on program and curriculum review, it becomes imperative to address the issues of content review and instructional/course outcomes as they relate to teaching and learning. . . . Instructional faculty need training in assistance with doing content review and developing measurable outcomes that are an accurate assessment of what students will be able to do at the completion of a course or sequence of courses.

Another source of funding geared toward the development of more sophisticated assessment of student outcomes is up for consideration in Senate Bill 1391. A total of $50 million extra funding is being considered for the purposes stated in the Bill:

> Funds provided. . . are for the purpose of implementing a performance based funding program for community colleges which is based on achievement by each district in meeting rigorous statewide and district specific goals. . . . These funds. . . shall be eligible to be spent in ways which have been shown to improve student learning and success as determined by the Chancellor.

Statewide goals set up by the Chancellor would guide such an assessment effort. Specific outcome measures are listed in the Bill:

> Degrees and certificates awarded; transfers and transfer ready students; persistence or retention rate of students; magnitude of specialized training for and numbers of businesses served; increased earnings after education; moving students from remedial to college level work; and access for students faced with disadvantages.

Another example of the movement to a more outcomes-based performance approach is written into the current statewide welfare-to-work initiative, CalWORKS. This program has the potential of serving two purposes important to the state - training welfare workers to enter the workplace as well as training community colleges to assess themselves based on student outcomes. As the FII grant and others like it as well as Senate Bill 1391 exemplify, the state has tried in the past to accomplish this second purpose, with no lasting or system-wide change. If more and more of the college funding is contingent on outcomes assessment, however, community colleges will likely become more and more concerned with student outcomes and the curriculum will be adjusted to meet defined outcome objectives.

Discussion

This discussion applies Foucault's concepts of power and knowledge to the findings. Specifically, power relations, disciplinary mechanisms of power, products of power, and points of resistance are considered.

In terms of governmental involvement, regulations have grown as the community college system has grown. As a disciplinary mechanism, the regulations, especially Title 5, effectively exert power over the curricular discourse and construct a mechanism of surveillance of the faculty. Thus, not only is the knowledge within the curriculum normalized by these regulations,

so are the faculty and their participation in curriculum formation. In response, faculty organized resistance to encroaching state power and etched their own space within the community college discourse through AB 1725.

Faculty involvement is central to both curriculum innovation and approval procedures. Faculty must rely on their own motivations to develop new curricula, illustrating that the governing structures at the college, district and state do not place innovation as a priority. Through participation in the approval process, faculty are given power, yet exercising that power can be personally expensive – requiring extra time and work outside of the classroom for which one oftentimes does not receive compensation. What emerges is a point of resistance against the power of the faculty; lack of faculty involvement in the curriculum approval process creates space for governing structures at the college, district, and state levels to assume more power.

The territoriality found in the curriculum by department or academic field is inextricably associated with power and knowledge. The boundaries of the academic disciplines are maintained by faculty's protection. Their vested interest in maintaining the boundaries is rooted in their own constructions of themselves as faculty members and academics. The ordering, or partitioning, of knowledge functions to discipline inquiry and construct the faculty engaged in study.

The curriculum procedures themselves reveal that power within the process is intricately hierarchized at the college, district, and state levels. Policies of exceptions in the approval process, as in the case of experimental or emergency courses, could be considered formalized points of resistance. Similarly, in the case of program design, strategies around the steps for new program approval demonstrate points of resistance, countering the administrative power of the governing structure. Another point of resistance available to faculty is the freedom of teaching

method. The faculty are afforded the power to present the approved course material as they choose.

State-mandated approval procedures are backed by the financial structure of community colleges. Community colleges must comply with state regulations or their funding will be cut. In addition, by basing funding on student enrollment, the students' power to decide what knowledge is important to them is supported. Student interest and class enrollment effectively normalizes the curriculum content around the values of students; if the students view a given course as valuable, then essentially so does the college.

Funding based on student outcomes is another state strategy in the disciplining of the curriculum. The kinds of knowledge that are valued under an outcomes-based funding approach are those that are conducive to measurement, often in terms of economic benefit. With an emphasis on monetary outcomes, portions of the curriculum that do not serve such economic purposes may be viewed as less worthwhile.

By applying Foucault's framework of power/knowledge to the study of curriculum formation, a new way of thinking about the curriculum and its formation emerges. An understanding of the fluidity of power within the process may empower some who previously felt powerless to recognize the possibilities of change within their reach. Moreover, recognition of the interplay between power and knowledge and the productive ability of this interplay allows for a deeper comprehension of how invested faculty and students are in the present curriculum discourse.

Conclusions and Implications

In general, the discourse of the curriculum is shaped by the faculty through a carefully governed process of inclusion of knowledge that is channeled by the regulations of the district and

state. The dispersed nature of power in this process is evident, yet it is clear that the faculty have more power than the state or than the students in dictating the content of the curricular discourse. In addition, there are other forces at work, such as college and university transfer policies and private industry needs, that can either support or counter the power of the faculty in curriculum formation. Courses that teach the skills identified by four year institutions and industry as necessary for successful incoming students or workers are the backbone of the community college curriculum.

A less obvious force from within the discourse comes from the faculty themselves. The roles of the faculty have been constructed by the very discourse that they are also responsible to create and modify. Thus, the faculty are limited by being themselves subjects of that discourse - it is difficult to be critical of a discourse that has shaped one's role as a faculty member within a given academic discipline. Radical modification of the curriculum discourse threatens to radically modify the construction of the faculty in the content of their courses and in their role as instructors.

In light of demands on the curriculum such as increased student enrollment, new instructional technologies, calls for culture and group studies, and welfare reform, the community college curriculum has been and will continue to be subject to reform. On a practical level, a comprehension of the dynamics of curriculum formation is essential in the process of change. Realizing the complex and productive nature of power, along with the disciplinary mechanisms by which it is exerted, can help in understanding the curriculum formation process.

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